

Appendix L – Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

Hereford Eastern River Crossing (ERiC) (SOC)

Herefordshire Council

bus services, through the reduction of congestion in the city centre and the provision of a free-flowing route with limited junction interactions across the river.

1.5 The route is expected to have an impact on a variety of different user groups:

- LTN 1/20 cycle facilities along the route will improve provision for pedestrians and cyclists and access to opportunities either side of the river, including the Skylon Park Enterprise Zone. It will encourage healthier and more active lifestyles, therefore increasing physical activity levels
- Private vehicle users making commuter or leisure trips will benefit from an alternative river crossing and improved resiliency of the network in times of an incident along the existing A49 bridge. Commuters from the north and east to Skylon Park Enterprise Zone will be able to access the site via a much more direct route which avoids the need to travel through the city centre
- Bus users will benefit from more reliable services due to less congestion in the city centre. The provision of a free-flowing route with limited junction interactions across the river will also provide an attractive route for bus services to navigate

1.6 Given the early stages of the scheme development, limited stakeholder engagement has been carried out, save for consultation with elected Councillors on the alignment of the route which helped to inform the shortlisting process. This strategy will therefore set out future stakeholder engagement going forward.

2. Objectives

2.1 The objectives of the stakeholder engagement are as follows:

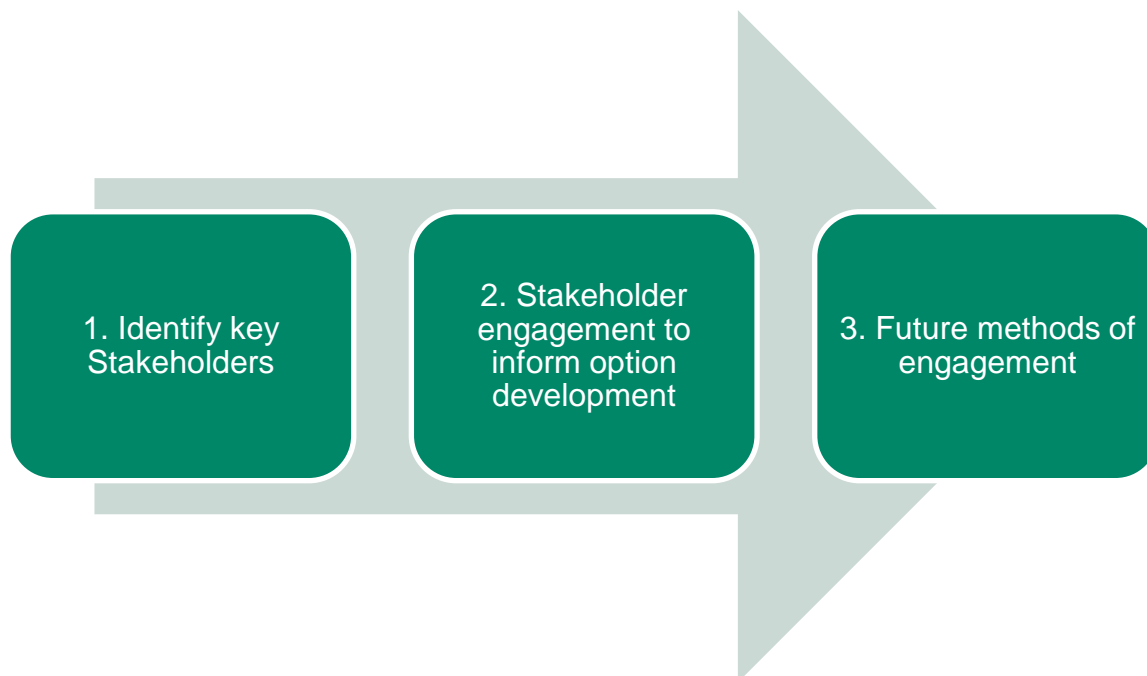
1. To engage and inform key stakeholders.
2. To gather information on key concerns that stakeholders may have.
3. To start to build relationships and trust with key stakeholders.
4. To manage stakeholder expectations regarding the wide range of potential schemes in the region for consideration.
5. To provide clarity to the stakeholders on the overall methodology, delivery timescales and interfaces with other developments within the proposed study areas.
6. To ensure that the team has critical information and views, when needed, to deliver the study on time

2.2 The project team will continue to review and identify if further stakeholders need to be engaged with to enhance the delivery of the scheme and inform the client team accordingly.

3. Approach to Engagement

3.1 An overview of the communications approach is shown in Figure 3-1.

Figure 3-1: Communications Approach



Stage 1 – Identify key stakeholders

3.2 To ensure the effective development of the scheme, a number of key stakeholders will need to be involved throughout the lifecycle of the project, from development through to delivery. At the outset of the study, key stakeholders were identified. The key stakeholders that have an interest in or will be impacted by the proposed scheme are summarised in Table 3-1, which also details their interest and role in the scheme. More specific detail on the approach for communicating with each stakeholder and the frequency of communications will be defined at OBC stage.

Table 3-1: Key Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Anticipated Role / Interest
Herefordshire Council	The scheme is being delivered within the Hereford area and will be project managed by Herefordshire Council.
Parish Councils	Engagement with local parish councils will ensure the project has synergy with the aspirations for the local area and addresses the issues and opportunities perceived by residents.
Users Groups / Active Travel Forum	Engagement with existing users of the surrounding network will help to understand any issues and concerns about the scheme, as well as being able to raise the profile of the new infrastructure and any adverse impacts during construction.
Sustrans	Engagement with Sustrans can help to ensure cycling and walking improvements are integrated with the existing network and facilities.
Emergency Services	Engagement with the various Emergency Services will be particularly important to understand any concerns associated with the construction phase.
NHS Public Health	Engagement with Public Health in terms of interest in health benefits of increased sustainable travel and reduced pollution.
Active Travel England	Engagement with Active Travel England will be particularly important in obtaining insights and buy-in in relation to the design of the scheme and its compliance with LTN 1/20 requirements.
Canal and River Trust	Given the crossing over the River Wye, it will be important to engage with this stakeholder
Cycling UK	As the UK's cycling charity and supported by a range of independent experts, impartial advice on the design of the route can be sought to ensure that the scheme achieves its full potential.
Local Councillors / Elected Representatives	Engagement with locally elected representatives provides an opportunity to capture local perceptions, concerns and suggestions for the scheme to maximise support and potential benefits.
Local Businesses	Engagement with local businesses will help to manage any impacts, including those during construction, and could also be used to promote use of the scheme amongst their employees and visitors.
Local Residents	Engagement with local residents will help to understand any issues and concerns about the scheme, as well as being able to raise the profile of the scheme and any adverse impacts during construction.
Landowners	Engagement with directly affected landowners.
Utility Companies	Engagement with relevant utility companies to understand the impact of the scheme upon existing utility infrastructure and potential mitigation required.
National Highways	There is likely to be a change in travel demand along the A49 which is managed by National Highways and therefore engagement with this stakeholder will be important.
Environment Agency	There are many environmental constraints associated with the river crossing, therefore there are numerous assessments required. Extensive and detailed flood modelling will be required and flood compensation measures will need to be agreed with the Environment Agency. Scheme design, including bridge crossing may change subject to the outcomes of the modelling. A drainage strategy, water quality risk assessment and a Water Framework Directive assessment would also be required.
Natural England	Detailed air quality, noise and habitat surveys, impact assessments and mitigation strategies will be developed in liaison with Natural England.

Historic England	Engagement with Historic England will also be required with the potential for archaeological investigation being needed to understand any scheme impacts on the Scheduled Monuments.
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Stage 2 – Stakeholder Engagement to Inform Option Development

- 3.4 As part of the development of the SOC and as Stage 2 of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, initial engagement with elected councillors on the alignment of the route has been undertaken, along with day-to-day involvement from the highway department of Herefordshire Council. Aside from this engagement, no further stakeholders have been consulted at this early stage of the scheme development.

Stage 3 – Future Methods of Engagement

- 3.5 As the scheme progresses, much more extensive and in-depth engagement with stakeholders will be required. The tools and methods of engagement which could be employed to ensure a holistic and inclusive approach to capturing views and sharing information on the delivery of the scheme is set out below.

Project Meetings

- 3.6 Project meetings should take place frequently (monthly) throughout scheme delivery and will be led by the Project Manager for the scheme, as defined in the Management Case with attendance from key stakeholders and external consultants as required to discuss design and any other issues emerging. Attendance by the ERiC Working Group may also be required.

Project Board Meetings

- 3.7 Herefordshire Project Board monthly meetings will consider the delivery of this scheme on its agenda, including a review of any key risks emerging on the live risk register. The ERiC Working Group should feed into and attend these meetings.

Public consultation

- 3.8 As part of the OBC stage, a round of public consultation will be held to understand the level of support for the scheme proposals and consider views for the scheme which could be delivered to maximise the benefits achieved. This will help to ensure clarity on the design proposals and ensure stakeholder buy-in before commencing with more detailed design stages.

Teams Calls

- 3.9 Various Teams calls and channels will be established between the client team, external consultants, and key stakeholders as appropriate throughout the lifecycle of the scheme delivery.

Press Releases

- 3.10 Press releases will be made as required.

Postcards / leaflets

- 3.11 For hard-to-reach households, businesses, and landowners in the vicinity of the route, postcards / leaflets will be distributed to raise awareness of any consultation events and share information on the progress of the scheme.

Online Survey

- 3.12 An online questionnaire could be prepared for email to all stakeholder to capture their views on the proposals. This would include all those organisations identified for one-to-one engagements, plus potentially local councillors, communities, landowners, and developers.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 At OBC stage, there will be a requirement to develop a more detailed Stakeholder Engagement Plan which demonstrates in more specific detail how the relevant interest groups will be further consulted in relation to the delivery of the scheme.
- 4.2 The Plan will detail the overall approach to ensure the benefits of the scheme are communicated and understood by specifying the level and type of communications required at different stages.
- 4.3 In progressing the scheme, Herefordshire Council will be required to commit the necessary resources to ensure local communities and businesses (including hard to reach groups) are informed and have an appropriate opportunity to contribute to the plans.